REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

Claims 10-16 are presently active in this case. Claims 1-9 were cancelled by a previous amendment. In the present Request for Reconsideration, none of the claims are amended.

In the October 26, 2009 Office Action, Claims 10-16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Walker (U.S. Patent Publication No. 2008/0091309) in view of Ingels (U.S. Patent No. 4,024,493).

In response to the rejection of Applicants' claims under 35 U.S.C. § 103, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection, and request reconsideration thereof, as next discussed.

Briefly summarizing, Applicants' independent Claim 10 is directed to a maintenance system. The system includes *inter alia* equipment units each associated with a monitoring unit for monitoring the respective equipment unit, the monitoring unit including, a test unit for testing the respective equipment unit on proper operation and for issuing fault messages in a case when the testing indicates a failure of the respective equipment unit, and a non-volatile memory unit for storing at least the fault messages; a central maintenance unit in communication with the test units of the equipment units, the central maintenance unit including a diagnosis unit for checking a state of the equipment units by using the fault messages of the test units, and for generating a report on an overall state of an operation of the maintenance system. In addition, the equipment units further include a detection circuit for detecting, capturing, and transferring the report on the overall state of the operation from the data transmission link into the respective non-volatile memory unit after the report on the overall state of the operation is available on the data transmission link.

As explained in Applicants' specification in a non-limiting embodiment, one of the features of Claim 10 is the storage of the report on the overall state of the operation in the non-volatile memory units of the local equipment units, instead of only keeping the report on the overall state of the operation in the central maintenance unit. In this way, if one of the equipment units is malfunctioning, it is possible to put the fault into context of the performance of the overall system, without having to consult the central maintenance unit. Please note that this discussion is provided for explanatory purposes only, and shall not be used to limit the scope of the claims in any fashion.

Turning now to the applied references, Walker is directed to a system for automatically controlling electro-mechanical systems, by the use of interfaced remote control systems and computers. (Walker, Abstract, ll. 13-21.) Walker explains that his embodiments are mostly used for the automotive industry, and can use various protocols to control, steer and brake a vehicle. (Walker, Abstract, ll. 22-30.) In the passages cited in the Office Action, Walker explains that an automated scroll bar announcement system is provided, that can display visual messages to surrounding cars, installed in a vehicle. (Walker, ¶ [0496]; see Office Action, p. 3, ll. 5-9). Moreover, Walker also explains that early warnings can be given to car drivers, by using sirens, bright lights, and the information bar. (Walker, ¶ [0370]). In Walker's paragraph [0373] that is cited by the Office Action, it is explained how an opened door can be detected to turn on the dome light, and it further explains some details on interconnection with electrical components. (Walker, ¶ [0373]).

However, these passages fail to teach a monitoring unit for monitoring the respective equipment unit, the monitoring unit including a test unit for testing the respective equipment unit on proper operation and for issuing fault messages, and a non-volatile memory unit for storing at least the fault messages, as required by Applicants' independent Claim 10. Because the cited passages of the applied reference Walker seem to address some electrical

components for a vehicle, and do not address all the elements of Applicants' Claim 10, Applicants respectfully request correction in the next Office Action.

Moreover, the pending Office Action contends that paragraphs [0503]-[0507] of Walker teach the features related to the tracking of a driver's speed with a GPS system, to report unauthorized speeds to authorities, and explains that special hardware could be used to make a trusted remote activity controller. (Walker, ¶¶ [0503], [507]; see also Office Action, from p. 3, l.13 to p. 4, l. 2). But these passages also fail to teach anything related to a detection circuit for detecting, capturing, and transferring the report on the overall state of the operation from the data transmission link into the respective non-volatile memory unit after the report on the overall state of the operation is available on the data transmission link, as required by Applicants' independent Claim 10.

Moreover, the cited passages of the applied reference Ingels, used by the pending Office Action to form a 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) rejection, fail to remedy the deficiencies of Walker, even if we assume that the combination is proper. Therefore, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection over the references Walker and Ingels, and request reconsideration thereof.

Consequently, in view of the present Request for Reconsideration, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal Allowance. A Notice of Allowance for Claims 10-16 is earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact Applicants' undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

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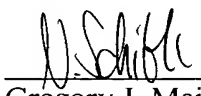

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